

First Mondays

Monthly Notes for Virginia's Adult Education Providers

September 8, 2015

Calendar

**Regional Program
Managers and
IEL/Civics Program
Managers Meeting**

**September 29-30
Richmond**

**CCRS Teacher
Leadership Institute**

**November 5-6
Richmond**

Starting Strong with CCRS

By Hillary Major, instructional standards and communications specialist,
Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC)

The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education have been a reality for Virginia adult educators for more than a year, but September and the start of a new academic term marks a fresh opportunity to commit to making the CCRS central to what we do. The full significance of the CCRS will take time, but programs and instructors need to think seriously about standards implementation now. Here are a few tips for the new school year. Numbers two and three are particularly relevant for instructors, while numbers four and five focus on the program level.

1. You don't need to be an expert on the CCRS to begin introducing the college and career readiness standards into your instruction or your program.
2. Use the language of the standards in your classroom. Even without introducing students to the "blue book," you can use the terminology of the standards and key advances.
 - Be sure students understand the concept of seeking "evidence" in a "text." When you prompt students to give supporting details and examples in their own writing or when discussing a reading passage, use the term "evidence." When reading a complex passage, encourage students to think of the text itself as the expert in the room and to refer to that expert in backing up their inferences and claims.
 - Share the math practices with students. If feasible, post them in the classroom. Point out instances when students spontaneously act like mathematicians by using the practices – perhaps by choosing an appropriate tool to solve a problem (MP.5) or respectfully pointing out a flaw in a classmate's reasoning and explaining their thinking when answering a question in class (MP.3). When you've designed a math lesson to incorporate one of the practices, be explicit about the skill you're practicing (e.g., modeling with math or reasoning abstractly).

WIOA

Resources for WIOA
Information

[OCTAE](#)

[Department of Labor](#)

[National Skills Coalition](#)

[Federal Register Web site](#)

3. Look over the standards (both math and ELA) that apply to the level(s) of the students you're teaching. If you notice standards that you don't normally teach, think about ways to incorporate them into your instruction during this academic year. Consider regularly including CCRS target standards in your lesson objectives.
4. Talk to your teachers (along with lead teachers, regional specialists, and other staff with instructional responsibilities) about their successes and challenges in incorporating the standards. If the CCRS are part of your "back to school" staff development, be sure to check in a few weeks after classes have started to refresh teachers' priorities.
 - Gathering information could be as informal as adding a question about the CCRS to the "how's it going?" asked when passing a teacher in the hall. Alternatively, you could send out a short CCRS-focused survey to your staff or email a request for their successes, challenges, and training requests. You might set the CCRS as a regular topic in meetings with lead teachers or other regional leaders.
 - The CCRS are organized by level (A-E, corresponding to NRS Educational Functioning Levels, with both Adult Secondary Education levels falling under level "E" in the standards). Most adult ed classes, however, are not so neatly categorized. Spend some time thinking about your student placement and about which standards you expect your instructors in multilevel classes to target. While you may not make dramatic changes to your class schedule or structure, keep the CCRS in mind when evaluating program outcomes.
5. Adult learners deserve to know that the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education have been adopted by our programs. Regional managers who have not already done so will need to make plans for introducing this fact to students. Are the CCRS referenced during program orientation? Is there a program expectation for instructors to include CCRS in their class outlines or lesson objectives? Are staff who interact with learners prepared to answer students' questions about how the CCRS line up with learners' credentialing goals?

The CCRS [Classroom Observation Guides](http://valrc.org/resources/ccrs.html) (which can be downloaded at <http://valrc.org/resources/ccrs.html>) are particularly helpful in giving a checklist for characteristics of engaging, standards-based instruction. Finally, please feel free to contact the Resource Center

GED® Stats

2015

GED accounts – 12,815

Test takers – 4,564

Completers – 2,205

Passers – 1,617

State pass rate - 73%

National pass rate - 65%

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with questions about helping staff become familiar with standards, incorporating CCRS into staff development, negotiating between the standards' call for depth and short-term learner outcomes, or other standards-related issues. I am pleased to share that my title at the Resource Center has been changed to "Instructional Standards and Communications Specialist" to signal my focus on CCRS implementation efforts, and I very much look forward to hearing more about your plans, worries, brilliant ideas, and lessons learned.

Goal Setting

There have been some changes recently concerning goal setting, goal-setting policy, and goal-setting policy certification (and recertification) training. Those changes are addressed below.

Early last year, Virginia Department of Education information technology staff (VDOE IT) removed the goal requirement for National Reporting System (NRS) reporting. Beginning July 1, 2014, adult education students in SSWS were captured on NRS tables as long as they had at least 12 hours of instruction and a valid assessment (i.e., a current pre-test or post-test result). This was a result of changes to NRS reporting requirements.

Another result of this change in reporting requirement is the demise of the OAEL Goal-Setting Policy. You may have noticed that that document no longer exists on the OAEL Web site. Only the Assessment Policy and Distance Education Policy documents remain. **Therefore, goal-setting policy certification training and recertification training are no longer required.** However, goal setting is still required for one NRS reporting function. Students with an entering educational functioning level (EFL) of ASE High can demonstrate a gain only by setting and meeting the goal of "obtain GED®." To accommodate this unique need and to comply with OAEL's decision to no longer require goal-setting policy certification and recertification training, SSWS will now accept entry of goals for ASE high students set by program personnel without the previously required goal-setting certification training.

Programs are encouraged to continue to set goals with their students as a model of good instruction and program improvement, but the setting and recording of goals are no longer a required component of the Adult Student Registration Form (ASRF, formerly USPD). Input from the field, along with OAEL's belief that goal setting is an effective instructional and motivational process, led to the decision to keep the goal-setting section on the ASRF, but it is now optional.

Money Matters

One Stop reports are due September 17, 2015, for FY 2014-2015 expenditures.

FFATA reports are due September 17, 2015.

The goal-setting training requirement will be turned off in SSWS when the collection window for 2015-16 is opened. Please note that while goal setting was also required in order to document the “achieve a follow-up outcome” justification for using a waiver, this justification will no longer be available beginning in 2015-16. The only criteria for the use of waivers will be that the learner has reached the end of course with the minimum number of hours required for post-testing.

If you have any questions or would like more information about goal setting, goal-setting policy, or goal-setting policy certification training, please contact George Bailey, specialist for communications and initiatives, at george.bailey@doe.virginia.gov or 804-786-9937.

National External Diploma Program

[Superintendent’s Memo #210-15](#), released August 21, 2015, addresses age requirements for enrollment in the National External Diploma Program (NEDP), stating that “participation in local and regional external diploma programs must be made available to adults who are 18 years of age and older who did not complete high school and are not enrolled in school. Students under the age of 18 may not participate in the external diploma program.” The memo is intended to clarify that the minimum age of service, as noted in the statute referenced, for NEDP participation is 18, the age at which students are no longer subject to the laws of compulsory attendance. The memo also serves to dispel a misconception that participation in the NEDP is available only to those 21 years of age and older.

Furthermore, this requirement refers to NEDPs that currently exist and will exist in the future. It is not a directive requiring all local and regional programs to start an NEDP. The establishment of local and regional NEDPs is not mandated by the state. Local and regional programs, in partnership with a local education authority that grants the diploma, make the decision to offer the NEDP as an adult high school diploma option.

At the directive of the Virginia Department of Education’s Office of Policy, the [NEDP Generalized Competencies Correlated with CASAS Competencies, version 5.0, January 2013, a CASAS program](#), will undergo a review to determine if their successful demonstration continues to meet the rigor required for the issuance of a Virginia Adult High School Diploma. The review process is expected to begin by the end of this year and will likely take a year to complete. Local and regional programs should be aware of the implications of this review of rigor if or when they are considering the establishment of an NEDP.

OAEL

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Please visit the OAEL
[Web site](#) for more
information about adult
education and literacy in
Virginia and for news
and updates throughout
the month.

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Distance Education Approved Curricula

Prior to the existence of the Office of Adult Education and Literacy's statewide distance education curriculum review panel, a list of approved distance education curricula was included as part of the Distance Education Policy document. Because of the changing nature of this list of approved curricula, the panel has recommended that this list no longer exist as a section of the policy document but instead be a separate, easily accessed and frequently updated document. The list of approved curricula is now included [here](#), within the VALRC's Distance Education portal. The panel will announce any curricula that is added or removed from the list through the *First Mondays* newsletter and the VALRC Distance Education portal. It is hoped that this new process will make your goals of exploring new distance education curricula easier.

GED® Fall 2015 Promotions

GEDTS will be running a Back to School Fall Promotion in order to incentivize testing, grow test-taker volume, and help boost test-taker confidence. From September 21 –October 31, students can take advantage of these two offers:

1. GED Ready® practice test for \$1
 - Students login to GED.com, purchase a GED Ready® practice test, and enter promo code **BACKTOSCHOOL** at checkout.
 - Students must purchase and take the GED Ready® practice test by Oct. 31.
 - Any practice test purchased for \$1, but not started by Oct. 31, will be refunded \$1.
 - Any unused \$1 vouchers after Oct. 31 can be applied towards future GED Ready® practice test purchase.

2. GED Ready® Practice Test Guarantee

Students who take the GED Ready® practice test between Sept. 21 and Oct 31 and score “Likely to Pass” are guaranteed to pass that test subject on the real test.

- Student must take the corresponding test subject within 60 day. If they do not pass, their retake is free!
- Free retake offer must be redeemed within 60 days of taking the GED® test subject.
- To schedule the free retake, students call 1-877-EXAM-GED.

Educators can find more information about the Back to School promotion, as well as collateral to promote these offers at:

<http://www.gedtestingervice.com/backtoschool>

Materials include:

- Customizable flyer
- Email template
- Sample social media posts
- Media advisory
- Web ads

Note to educators: Please do not distribute these materials to students until the start of the promotion, Sept. 21. The promo code will not work until then.

Reminders

2014-2015 EL Civics End of Year Reports are due September 14, AEFLA revisions (if required) are due September 18, and IEL/Civics revisions (if required) are due September 25.